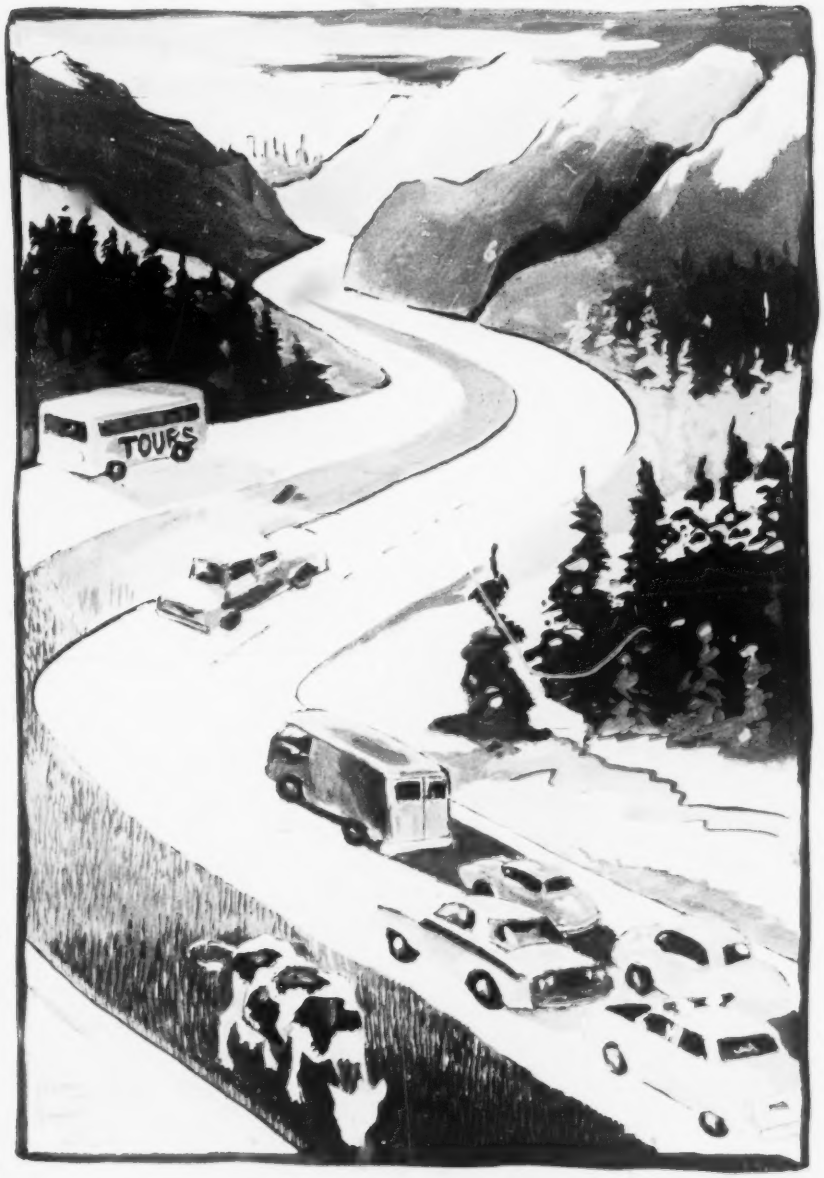
ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR — STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

ALASKA ECONOMIC
TRENDS

Contents

1 The MatSu Borough: Recovery in Sight

7 The Gender Gap

9 Alaska's Employment Scene
New Jobs Keep June's Unemployment Low

Employment Scene Tables:

14-16-17 Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

18 Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries

20 Labor Force by Region and Census Area

Alaska Economic Trends:
1990 winner of the INTERSTATE CONFERENCE OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AGENCIES award for the most outstanding monthly publication concerning labor market information.

Alaska Economic Trends is a monthly publication dealing with economic-related issues of Alaska. Opinions and analyses expressed by guest authors may not be consistent with those of the Alaska Department of Labor.

We welcome contributions on current economic issues from our readers. For a copy of our editorial policy contact the Editor, *Alaska Economic Trends*, Alaska Department of Labor, P.O. Box 25501, Juneau, Alaska 99802-5501, Telephone: (907) 465-4500. Telefax: (907) 465-2101.

***Steve Cowper*, Governor, State of Alaska**

***Jim Sampson*, Commissioner, Department of Labor**

***Chuck Caldwell*, Chief, Research and Analysis**

***John Boucher*, Editor**

September 1990
Volume 10
Number 9

The Trends 101

While compiling information on the 100 largest private employers in Alaska, we inadvertently overlooked one firm. Federal Express Corporation, the air courier service with its Alaska headquarters in Anchorage, grew rapidly in 1989. Its annual average employment of 261 made it Alaska's 67th largest employer.

Cover design by Jim Fowler

The MatSu Borough: Recovery in Sight

by Holly Stinson

Like most of the rest of the state, the Matanuska-Susitna (MatSu) Borough went on an economic roller coaster ride during the 1980s. Unfortunately, the ride was rougher in MatSu than in other regions of Alaska. The climb was steeper during the early '80s (with percent growth rates 2-3 times those of Anchorage) and the drop was more severe during the 1986-88 recession. Today the MatSu economy exhibits signs of renewed health.

Testaments to the recession remain: a boarded up hotel now owned by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, vacant houses owned by other financial institutions, and shopping malls with empty space. Abandoned are grandiose plans for projects aimed at economic recovery — a multi-million dollar port facility with rail access, and an elaborate downhill ski resort.

However, signs of recovery are evident: the number of institution-owned homes is down, shopping malls are beginning to fill up with new businesses, the residential real estate market is turning around, and tourism is growing. A couple of other indicators are at all-time highs — school enrollment and telephone hookups. In addition, there is one major project which is a definite go — the federal government is building a Job Corps Center in Palmer.

Commuters are a Significant Part of the MatSu Economy

The MatSu economy is not confined to activity within borough boundaries. Eighty percent of the borough's population live in Palmer, Wasilla or nearby suburban areas — that means over 30,000 borough residents are within commuting distance of Anchorage.

A recent study by the University of Alaska's Institute for Social and Economic Research found that in 1987, 27% of MatSu residents who held jobs worked in Anchorage. Another 10% of MatSu's working population held a job elsewhere in the state (for example, oil field jobs on the North Slope). The MatSu Borough is therefore affected by Anchorage's economy and economic events occuring elsewhere in the state.

Recent Growth in Employment, Population

MatSu has a geographic diversity in its workforce — those who work in the local public and private sectors, and those who commute to jobs in other areas. In addition, there are a considerable number of self-employed workers who aren't included in nonagricultural wage and salary employment statistics. In the MatSu Borough many gold miners, agricultural workers, and loggers as well as some of those in the trade, transportation and services industries can be counted among the self-employed.

The statistics in Table 1 count the jobs in the MatSu Borough, excluding self-employed individuals. So while Table 1 indicates a small decline in jobs during 1986-1988, it doesn't reflect the hundreds of MatSu residents who lost jobs in Anchorage and elsewhere in the state, or the self-employed who lost their businesses.

About the author:

Holly Stinson is a labor economist employed with the Research & Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. She is based in Anchorage.

Table 1

Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Employment by Industry 1980-1989

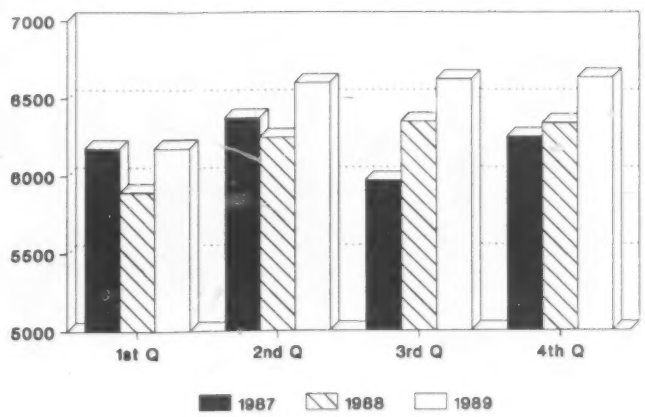
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Total	3,265	3,701	4,383	5,355	6,542	6,991	6,699	6,193	6,207	6,508
Mining	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Construction	178	253	518	778	971	710	427	261	179	223
Manufacturing	37	106	70	67	111	111	88	83	108	124
Trans., Comm. & Utilities	319	343	381	525	595	670	680	688	638	639
Trade	733	748	898	1,173	1,547	1,736	1,590	1,643	1,523	1,600
Finance-Ins. & R.E.	120	131	198	208	280	290	296	206	159	174
Services	460	537	604	793	991	1,129	1,101	1,019	1,088	1,183
Government	1,341	1,418	1,564	1,734	1,977	2,229	2,425	2,248	2,357	2,415
Federal	112	103	101	104	112	100	105	102	99	104
State	403	460	545	596	651	737	761	759	791	811
Local	826	855	919	1,035	1,214	1,392	1,559	1,387	1,467	1,500
Miscellaneous	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

** Nondisclosable

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 1

MatSu Employment by Quarter



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Over the year growth began showing up in MatSu's employment statistics beginning with the third quarter of 1988. (See Figure 1.) While these employment statistics understated the decline in MatSu's economy during the downturn, they are also understating the strength of the recovery. MatSu employment grew 4.8% in 1989; jobs in Anchorage increased 4.5%. Undoubtedly some of those Anchorage jobs went to MatSu residents. One indicator of the recovery is the unemployment rate, which has been steadily declining in the MatSu Borough since a 1987 high.[1/]

Another indicator of recovery is that after losing several thousand people, MatSu's population is once again on the rise. (See Figure 2.) School enrollment, which doubled from 1979 to 1986, declined by several hundred during 1987-88. It then increased just as rapidly for the 1989-90 school year, reaching its highest level ever. Officials expect a slight increase this fall to 8,900 students. In response to the increasing student population, Colony Junior High School, completed in 1987, will open its doors this fall for the first time. Its vacant companion high school is slated to open in the fall of 1991.

Public Sector Mostly Education & State Jobs

Government employment accounts for 37% of all wage and salary employment in the region, and employment with the MatSu School District accounts for more than half of all government employment. (See Figure 3.) Over 90% of the MatSu Borough's budget goes to operate schools and to retire school construction debt; most of this money (close to 75%) comes from the state's coffers. State aid increased by $10 million for the 1990 fiscal year to $68.6 million. Still, the borough was forced to raise the mill rate on property tax and dip into reserves to meet this year's budget.

State jobs account for one-third of public sector employment. The MatSu College of the University of Alaska (almost 200 employees) and the Palmer Correctional Center (160 employees) are the largest state agencies in the borough. The Palmer prison is building new housing at a cost of $5 million. The construction project will increase capacity by 70 inmates and necessitate at least ten new jobs. Plans call for additional funding next year to renovate the old housing into activity centers.

Federal employment in the MatSu region has been the steadiest of all sectors through the ups and downs of the 1980s. Most federal jobs in this region are with the U.S. Postal Service.

Mining Plays Important Role in MatSu

Although public sector employment grabs the largest share of the employment pie at 37%, that still leaves 63% with the private sector. Much of the private sector employment depends on the region's natural resources of minerals, timber, fish, and scenery.

There are too few firms to allow for disclosure of total mining employment, but one mining company, Valdez Creek, was among the region's five largest private employers. (See Table 2.) A blow was dealt to the MatSu Borough when they suspended operations in late 1989. Over 130 jobs were lost, along with a monthly payroll of $750,000. According to a company spokesman, 60% of that payroll went to MatSu residents. In late

Table 2

MatSu Borough's Five Largest Private Employers*

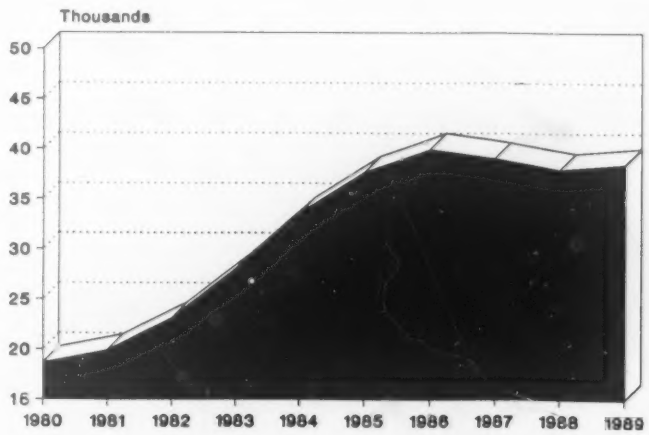
	1989 Annual Average Employment
Carr Gottstein Inc.	250
Matanuska Telephone Assoc. (MTA)	242
Valley Hospital	233
Matanuska Electric Assoc. (MEA)	136
Valdez Creek Mining Co.	110

*Published with employers' permission.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 2

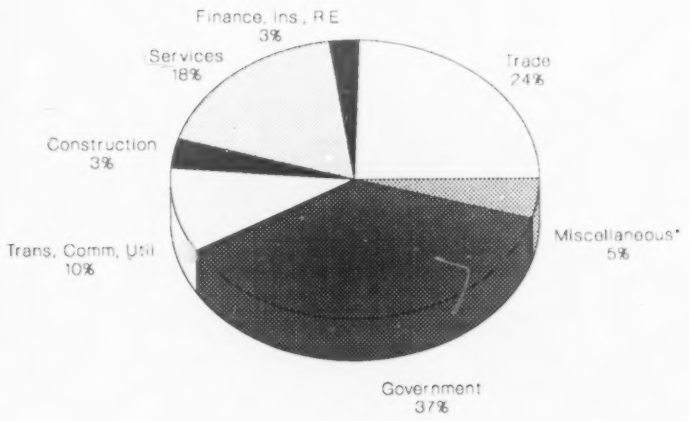
MatSu Borough Population



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 3

Employment in MatSu Borough By Industry, 1989



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

July, the owners announced intentions to reopen the mine. However, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation will have to approve the company's plan to comply with environmental regulations.

While many MatSu residents hope for a reopening of Valdez Creek, another mining project received the green light this year. Idemitsu-Kosan plans to mine a million tons of coal a year for the next 15 years from Wishbone Hill near Palmer for export to Japan. The legislature's approval of $9 million to the Alaska Railroad for needed railroad engines and coal cars to transport the coal to Seward should allow the project to happen. This mining operation will mean 180 new jobs with an annual payroll of $10 million.

A Palmer firm began exploration work this July in an abandoned mine in the same area as the Wishbone Hill deposit. Other coal deposits could turn into feasible ventures now that there is a coal terminal at Seward and the railroad has expanded coal-carrying capacity.

Currently the only presence of the oil & gas industry in the MatSu Borough is in the form of paychecks to residents working in Anchorage or the North Slope Borough. Last winter ARCO Alaska tested for oil and gas in the Big Lake/Houston area. This September's lease sales may shed light on the confidential results of those tests.

Another source of jobs in the mining sector is the sand and gravel industry. During the construction heyday of the early 1980s more than three times as much sand and gravel was mined as today's 2 million ton estimate. One major highway project — turning the Glenn Highway into a 4-lane divided road — could double the sand and gravel production for a two-year period.

Large, Small Construction Projects On Tap for MatSu

The MatSu Borough captured $31.3 million for capital projects (excluding the above-mentioned $9 million for the Alaska Railroad) in SFY 1991. Close to $24 million is federal highway funds, almost all of which is for the Glenn Highway widening to four lanes from Eklutna to the Parks Highway. Long a priority for commuters to Anchorage, design is now nearly complete. Construction will begin in 1991 and is scheduled for completion by the end of 1993. The road should make commuting to Anchorage jobs easier and make real estate in the Palmer-Wasilla area more attractive.

Another project scheduled to start next year is the federal Job Corps Center. The borough, City of Palmer, and federal governments are all contributing to this project, which will house 200 students and have a faculty of at least 65. The City of Palmer hopes to complete road and sewer work this season, so construction of the dormitories and classrooms can begin next spring.

This construction season saw work begin on a new $6.5 million airport in Wasilla, a new elementary school and an addition to one of the high schools. For this year and the coming few, construction projects are on the rise in MatSu but will not approach 1983-85 levels any time soon, if ever. (See Figure 4.)

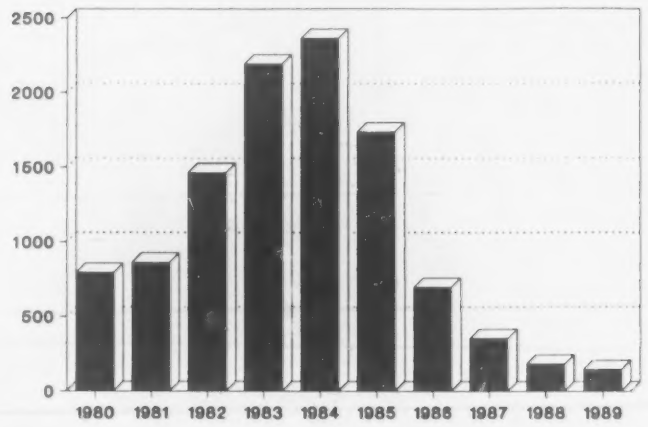
Real Estate Market Improving

Real estate in the MatSu Borough is finally showing signs of life. The number of properties owned by financial institutions has declined 40% since 1989's high of 1,190. Construction of a house built on speculation began in June, the first in many years. Information from the multiple listing service (which doesn't include all residential sales) shows mixed news.

The average selling price is still declining, but the number of units sold is on the upswing. The number of houses sold in 1989 was about double that of the bleak year of 1987. If 1990 finishes at the same pace as the first six months, the number of houses sold will be 14% above 1989. The year could end on an even better note; this June saw half again as many units sold as last June. MatSu property will become more attractive in the future as the price of Anchorage real estate climbs and as improvements are made to the Glenn Highway.

Figure 4

New Construction in MatSu Borough



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Communications and Utilities Expanding

Two of the largest employers in the borough are in the transportation, communications and utilities industry. Matanuska Telephone Association is the second largest private employer in the region and the 73rd largest statewide. (See "Trends 100" article in the August issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*.) The cooperative that supplies electricity in the area, MEA, is also one of the five largest private employers in MatSu.

A relative newcomer to the region, Enstar Natural Gas, is now the largest taxpayer in the borough. Having relatively cheap natural gas energy has made MatSu housing more economical than ever. Another newcomer to the borough is General Communications, Inc. The firm opened an operator services center in Wasilla this month, creating 50 new jobs. Continuing to attract new businesses is one key to the borough's future economic health.

Timber, Agriculture Small but Significant

Timber harvesting is a growing industry in many parts of Southcentral Alaska, but has remained quite small in the MatSu Borough. An industry official estimated 200 people in the area either log or operate small sawmills; this number is not anticipated to grow appreciably anytime soon.

Agriculture is the region's oldest economic pillar. Today the area accounts for two-thirds of the state's total agricultural production. Several farms produce milk for Matanuska Maid, the state-owned dairy. These include four at the Point McKenzie dairy farm project which the state began in 1982.

Tourism Holds Potential for MatSu

The borough has numerous natural attractions, but visitor facilities are scarce. Many people pass through on tour buses headed for Denali Park or Valdez; borough entrepreneurs would like to capture more of their business. The Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau was formed in 1986 to develop tourism, and a 5% bed tax was levied in 1989 to raise funds for tourism support. Increasing numbers of people are visiting the region — sportfishing doubled from 1978 to 1988, and the number of bed-and-breakfast facilities has grown ten-fold in the last four years.

The state maintains more than 30 sites in the MatSu Borough, and Denali State Park is the most popular. Of the more than 1.2 million visits to state parks[2] in MatSu from July 1988 through June 1989, more than 30% were at this popular spot. The largest tourist project to date is a planned hotel development at this park. Dubbed the South Denali Visitor Complex, it would be a public/private venture. The federal government would build a visitor center, the state government would donate land and infrastructure such as sewers and roads, and the private sector would build a facility with as many as 250 rooms, at an estimated cost of $29 million. Current legal action keeps the fate of the project unsure at this time.

Attracting summer tourists has been the main focus in MatSu, but winter tourism holds potential, too. A Japanese firm backed out of plans to build a downhill ski resort in Hatcher Pass near Wasilla and Palmer, but others are interested in developing the area. The Department of Natural Resources

hopes to begin the leasing process later this year. Many existing facilities cater to winter recreationists such as cross-country skiers and dog mushers.

Other tourist attractions in the region include the Musk Ox Farm near Palmer, the Knik and Matanuska glaciers, the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race Headquarters, and the state fair which attracts about 180,000 people each August. Almost all climbers of Mt. McKinley begin their journey in Talkeetna. Over 1,000 people a year now attempt the climb, and the National Park Service is considering a permit system to limit this number.

Trade, Services Sectors Affected by Tourism

Tourism has a big impact on trade and services, and these are two sectors where employment didn't decline too drastically during the 1986-88 recession. A steady stream of tourists, which increases each year, has done a lot to keep both trade and services employment from suffering larger job losses. While other industries grab the headlines, these two together provide 43% of all jobs.

Summary: MatSu is Rebounding from Recession

The MatSu Borough went through a tremendous period of growth in the early 1980s, followed by a severe recession in 1986-88. By the last half of 1988, though, employment was once again on the increase. In 1989 the number of jobs increased close to 5%. These employment statistics don't count the considerable number of residents holding down jobs in Anchorage or elsewhere in the state.

More than one-third of MatSu jobs are in the public sector, and most of these are in education. In the private sector trade and services account for the largest share of employment. Mining — for coal, gold, sand and gravel — is important to the MatSu economy and could become more so in the near future. Major construction projects are on the horizon, such as a 4-lane highway and a federal Job Corps Center. Two of the largest employers in MatSu are in the transportation, communications and utilities industry; the number of jobs and firms in this sector is increasing.

School enrollment is at an all-time high, and the real estate market is finally turning around (although values still lag behind). Although support from state revenues may decline in the future, the MatSu Borough is making firm strides toward economic recovery for now.

Notes:

1/ Unlike wage and salary employment, unemployment statistics are measured by place of residence. So if MatSu residents who worked in Anchorage lost their jobs, they would be counted among the unemployed in the MatSu Borough. Unemployment statistics also include self-employed individuals, unpaid family help, domestic help and agricultural workers.

2/ Each entry is counted as one visit. A single person could visit several state parks, or the same park on several occasions. In either case, this one person would account for multiple visits.

The Gender Gap

By F. Terry Elder

Women in Alaska earn considerably less than men.[1] The average annual income for a female, $14,900 in 1988, is about 62% of the average male's annual income of $24,200. Women earn less than men in every geographic location of the state, and for every age, industry, and occupation group.[2]

There's A Gender Gap In the U.S.

Alaska women earn a smaller percentage of male income than do women in the U.S. as a whole.[3] In an April 2, 1990 issue, the *U.S. News & World Report* (page 45) reported that, in the U.S., women earned about 66% of male income in 1988. That is up from 59% in 1970 and 60% in 1980. These data are included in a book, *Understanding The Gender Gap; An Economic History of American Women* by economist Claudia Golden. "The Gender Gap" is the phrase used to mean that women earn less than men and have systematically different occupational distributions.

Golden attributes the gap to various institutional and social factors, which have combined to limit education and training (human capital investment) choices, and employment opportunities of women. The gains made by women since 1970, therefore, result from favorable changes in some of these factors. Women have increased their investment in education, and work schedules have become more accommodative to a wider variety of workers. Golden predicts a bright future for the balance of this decade. This is because she expects labor to be in relatively short supply and women to account for a larger share of the work force.

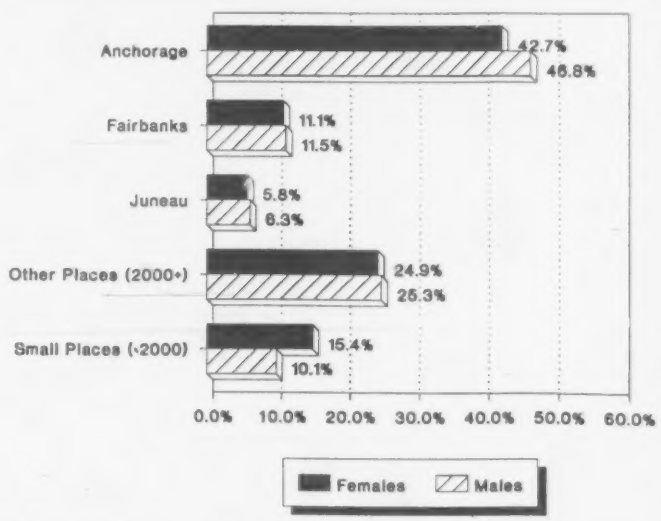
If that is favorable to women in the U.S., then it should also benefit women in Alaska. In the report *Alaska 2000*,[4] it is projected that women will account for almost 73% of the growth in the Alaska labor force between 1987 and 200[illegible]. This is difficult for employers to i[illegible]e, and likely will have beneficial imp[illegible] on work opportunities for women. This could be expected to narrow the gender gap in the future.

The Alaska Gender Gap is Found Across Locations...

The promise of a brighter future for women may not alleviate the concern of those who look at the 1988 data. Almost half of the employment and earnings of the study group is located in Anchorage.[5] (See Figure 1.) In fact, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau account for almost 60% of employment and almost 65% of annual wage income. Other places with populations of at least 2,000 account for about 25% of employment

Figure 1

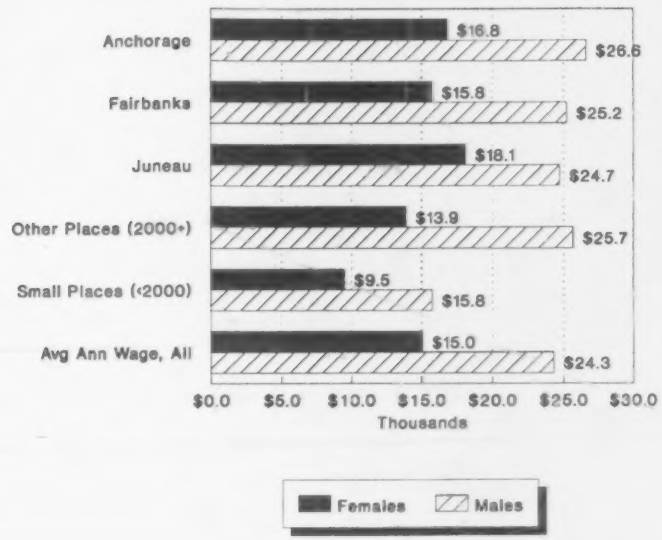
Distribution of Total Employment & Annual Wage Income by Location, Alaska, 1988



Note: Date for 128,222 males & 113, 102 females.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 2

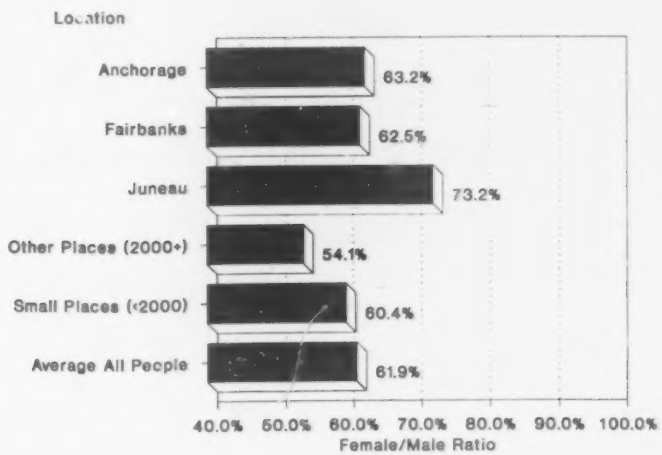
Male & Female Average Annual Wage Income by Location, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 241,324 people.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 3

Female/Male Ratios of Private & Public Sector Average Annual Wage Income by Location, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 241,324 people.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

and income. Small places account for slightly over 15% of employment and 10% of wage income.

Women workers are concentrated in the three largest cities somewhat more than are men, with almost 62% of women in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau, compared to 58% of men. Each of the other two location categories accounts for a relatively larger share of men than of women. About 26% of men and 24% of women workers live in other places with a population of 2,000 or more. Somewhat less than 17% of men and about 14% percent of women workers live in places with a population of less than 2,000.

Average (per person) wage income is much lower in the small places category for both men and women. (See Figure 2.) The male average wage of $15,800 in small places is only 65% of the statewide male average wage of $24,300. The female average wage of $9,600 in small places is about 64% of the statewide female average wage of $15,000.[6] Average wage income in the three major cities is higher than statewide average incomes for both men and women. Some of the reasons for the geographic difference in income of both men and women include differences in industry and occupation distributions between large and small places, and differences in hours worked (seasonality of employment).

The ratio of female to male average annual wage income is 61.9%.[7] (See Figure 3.) Women earn less than men in each location category, with remarkable consistency. The locations that stand out are Juneau and the other places category. Women earn about 73% of what men earn in Juneau, but only 54% of what men earn in the other places category. This probably reflects the importance of state and local government employment for women in Juneau, and differences in occupational patterns in Juneau and the other places category.

...Age Groups...

The average age of the workers in the data set is about 34.1 years old.[8] Women tend to be somewhat younger than men,

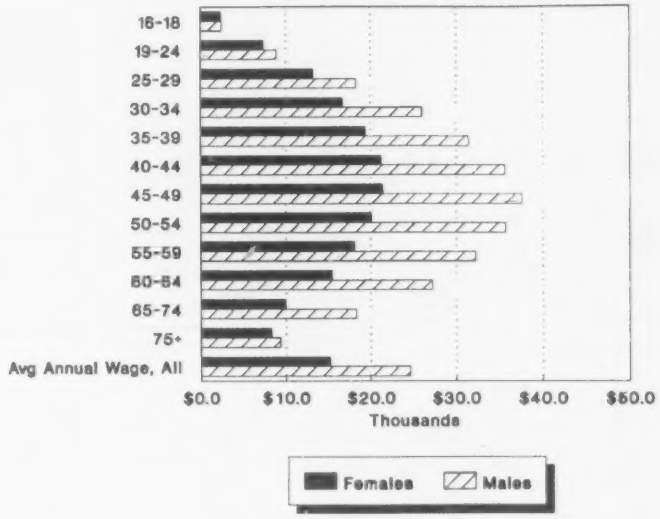
at 34.0 years versus 34.5 years for men. There is a clear age pattern of average (per person) wage income for both women and men. (See Figure 4.) Average wage income rises until the age group 45 to 49 and then declines. This pattern probably reflects significant differences in wage rates and hours worked. Wage rates should rise with time as individuals gain more education, training, and experience. Hours worked will be affected by the ratio of part-time to full-time employment and retirement. In the publication *Alaska 2000* (page 40), it is shown that males and females have a similar age pattern for part-time work relative to full-time employment. That is, part-time employment tends to be a larger percentage of total employment for teenagers of both sexes. The part-time percentage declines for older age groups, and then increases for senior citizens of both sexes. Although these age patterns are similar, the percentage of part-time employment for adult women is sharply higher than that for adult men. Without data for hours worked, it is not possible in this study to account for these different factors.

Like wage differences by location, the per person wages of females are less than those of males for every age group. (See Figure 5.) The pattern is interesting. For teenagers there is almost parity between the sexes. Even for the next age group (19-24), women do not fare too poorly. This suggests that employers, many of whom hire young people for largely part-time jobs that require little skill and training and for which they expect high turnover, pay essentially the same wage rate regardless of sex.

The rapid decline in the ratio for the next age groups (25-74) may reflect the decline in hours worked by women whose family responsibilities require them to seek part-time rather than full-time work. In 1980, women were almost three times more likely than men to work part time between the ages of 25 and 64, and twice as likely after the age of 65. In addition, even for women who work full time, if they drop out of the labor force for any extended time to raise children, they

Figure 4

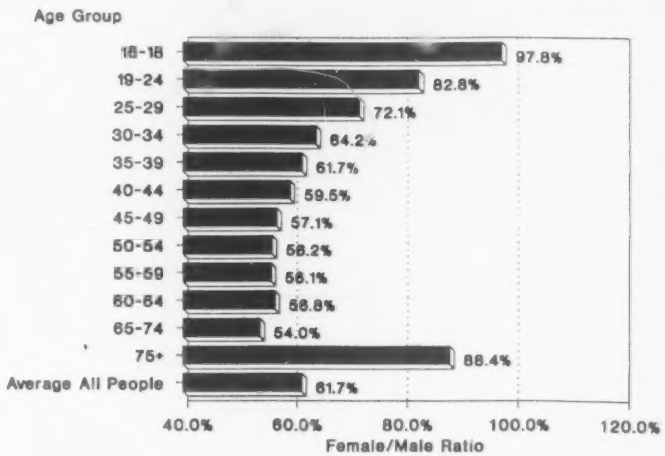
Male & Female Annual Average Wage Income by Age Group, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 127,173 males & 112,747 females.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 5

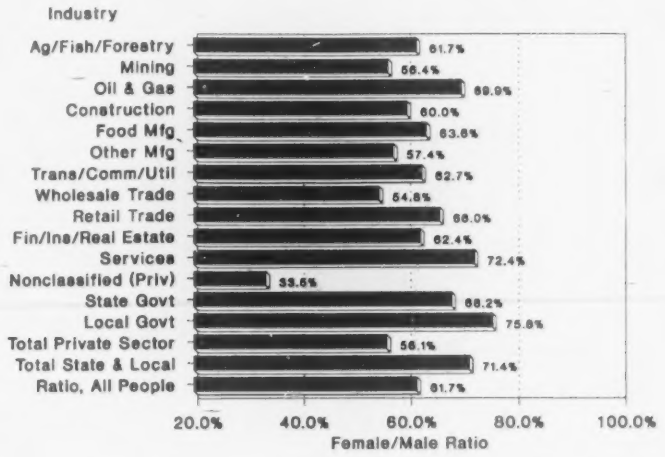
Female/Male Ratios of Private & Public Sector Average Annual Wage Income by Age, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 243,920 people.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Figure 6

Female/Male Ratios of Private & Public Sector Average Wages by Industry, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 129,378 males & 114,642 females.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

could be penalized when they seek to enter the labor force again. For example, a woman who is 30 years old is more likely than a 30-year-old man to have dropped out of the labor force because of family responsibilities. To the extent that employers pay for experience and job tenure, this would hurt women relative to men of the same age group.

The similarity in the ratio[9] for those over age 74 compared to teenagers and young adults suggests that the most senior members of the work force are treated in a similar fashion by employers. This is not to say that they are the same employers, although this is something that could be investigated further using this data set. It does suggest, however, that, similar to teenagers, seniors are paid for accomplishing a certain task, and the pay to accomplish the task is similar for men and women over the age of 74.

...Industry Groups...

A look at relative wage income by major industry reveals that women earn less than men in every industry. (See Figure 6.) They earn 56.1% of men in the private sector, 71.4% of men in state and local government. The highest ratios for women are found in local government (75.8% of men), services (72.4%), oil and gas (69.9%), state government (68.2%), and retail trade (66.0%). Among major industries, the lowest ratios are found in wholesale trade (54.8%), mining (56.4%), and the other manufacturing industries (57.4%).

The comparison between female and male per person income for the private sector in total looks worse than for the individual components of the private sector because of the heavier distribution of women in the low income industries. The services and retail trade industries, two of the lowest average wage income industries, comprise about 53% of female employment, but only 35% of male employment. In addition to these distribution differences, within **every** industry the percentage of women making less than $20,000/year exceeds that of men.

...And Occupation Groups

Women also earn less than men in every occupation group. (See Figure 7.) Women fare particularly poorly in the sales workers, service workers, operators/assemblers/laborers, and agriculture/fishing/forestry workers groups. They do the best in the administrative support group, but do not come close to parity in any group.

Of the nine major occupation groups, executives/managers and professionals comprise about 23% of female workers and 20% of male workers. Many of the other occupational groups, however, are dominated either by men or women. Women comprise about 80% of the workers in the administrative support occupational group, and 60% of the sales workers. Both groups have below average wage incomes. Men comprise about 82% of the workers in the operators/assemblers/laborers group, and 95% of the workers in the mechanics/construction crafts group. The latter group has above average income.

In **every** occupation group but one (administrative support), workers earning less than $20,000/year comprise a larger percentage of female employment than of male employment. This observation is similar to the one made about income distributions within industries. Thus, just as in the industry analysis, it is

found that women not only tend to be concentrated in lower wage occupation groups, but within each group, women tend to be concentrated on the low end of the income scale.

Many Factors Contribute to the Gender Gap

It is noted above that women earn about 38% less than men. They earn less in every location, and for every age, industry group and occupation group. However, even when age, location, industry group, and occupation group are held constant (by regression analysis), women earn about 18% less than men. This means that if women and men had identical distributions of age, location, industry group, and occupation group, the observed wage gap still would be about 18%.

What might cause the existence of this 18% wage gap? One potential factor is that **within** the industry and occupation groups, women are more concentrated than men in lower income categories. As a result, even though some of the wage differences could be reduced if women worked proportionally in the same industry and occupation groups as men, women would still earn less due to the wage distribution of their employment **within** the industry and occupation groups.

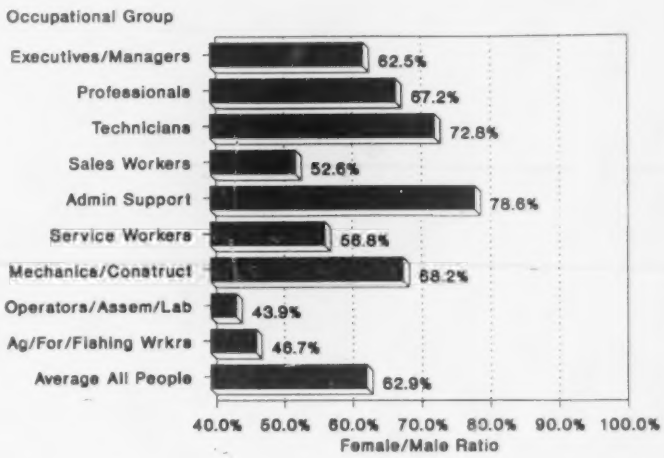
Another potential factor could be the tendency of women of every age to be more likely than men to work part time rather than full time. If women systematically tend to work fewer hours than men, their annual wage income would be less than men, all other things being equal.

If women had less labor force experience or job tenure as a result of family responsibilities, these might be factors which could result in a gender gap. If there were systematic differences in the education and training of men and women, these differences also could be reflected in the 18% wage gap.

Finally, another potential factor, which cannot be ignored at this point, would be the possibility of discrimination. The analysis, however, is a long way from showing that some type of discrimination is a factor. It is more accurate to say that the analysis does not rule out the possibility that there is some type of sex discrimination in the system. This certainly provides ample reason for further data collection and investigation, since the total wage income gap is significant.

Figure 7

Female/Male Ratios of Private & Public Sector Annual Average Wage Income by Occupational Group, Alaska, 1988



Note: Data for 92,956 males & 77,457 females.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

Notes:

[1] This article is based on a report titled *The Gender Gap*, a study about the 1988 Alaskan employment and earnings of wage and salary employees who are covered by unemployment insurance and received a 1988 Permanent Fund dividend. The study, which focuses on women, covers 114,642 women (47.0% of the total number of people in the study) and 129,378 men (53.0% of the total). Their total wage income is about $4.85 billion, composed of female income of $1.72 billion (35.4% of the total wage income) and male income of $3.14 billion (64.6% of the total). Total personal income in Alaska in 1988 was about $10.0 billion, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce. The Alaska Department of Labor reported 1988 total nonagricultural wage and salary income of about $5.88 billion.

2/ The income differences between the sexes may be caused by a number of factors. Some of these factors, for which there is no information in the data set used in the study, include the number of hours worked, educational attainment, experience in an occupation, and job tenure.

3/ An analysis of what factors cause women in Alaska to earn a smaller percentage of male income than their counterparts in the U.S. is beyond the scope of the study. It could be an interesting future research project.

4/ *Alaska 2000* is a report published by Research & Analysis, Alaska Department of Labor, in June 1989.

5/ Of the 114,642 women and 129,378 men in the study, location information is available for 113,102 women and 128,222 men. Location is defined by the workers' Permanent Fund dividend zip codes. The workers have been separated into five location categories: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, other large places (with populations of 2,000+), and small places (with populations less than 2,000).

6/ Calculated averages will differ slightly as the study's population changes size. For example, data for 244,020 persons were available to compute average annual income statewide, but location specific data were available for only 241,324 persons, age specific data for only 239,920 persons.

7/ This calculation is based on the 241,324 people in the study who provided location data.

8/ Of the 114,642 women and 129,378 men in this study, age information is available for 112,747 women and 127,173 men.

9/ The ratio of female average annual wage income to male average annual wage income.

The Gender Gap is available from the Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section, P.O. Box 25501, Juneau, Alaska 99802-5501

About the author:

F. Terry Elder is an economist employed with the Research & Analysis Section, Administrative Services Division, Alaska Department of Labor. He is based in Juneau.

New Jobs Keep June's Unemployment Low

by Holly Stinson

June's wage and salary employment figures continued to show over the year growth, but for the third month in a row the growth rate slowed. Not coincidentally, June also marked the third month in which employment comparisons to a year ago were impacted by last year's oil spill cleanup.

The slowdown of employment growth was not unexpected, given the high number of jobs available last summer. What is surprising is that the economy managed to make up for the several thousand missing cleanup jobs as well as post a gain of 4,000 jobs over last June's total. (See Table 2 and Figure 1.) Every region saw more jobs this June than last, except for Gulf Coast, site of the oil spill cleanup. (See Table 3 and Figure 2.)

As employment increased, Alaska's unemployment rate fell to 6.5% from May's 7.3%. (See Table 5.) While not as low as last June's rate of 6.1%, it is the second lowest rate for June since 1978. In June, Alaska had the fifth highest unemployment rate nationwide. (See Table 1.)

Seasonal job growth was a healthy 4.7% (11,000 jobs) from May to June. (See Table 2.) This compares to 9,800 new jobs for the same period in 1988 (a 4.6% seasonal increase) and 12,200 in 1989 (a 5.3% increase). Big employment gainers in June were the trade, services and manufacturing industries.

Table 1

Top Five Statewide Unemployment Rates June 1990

Rank	State	Rate
1	Michigan	7.5%
2	Arkansas	7.2%
3	Louisiana	7.0%
4	West Virginia	6.7%
5	Rhode Island	6.5%
5	Alaska	6.5%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics & West Virginia Department of Employment Security

Good Fishing Adds Jobs in Manufacturing

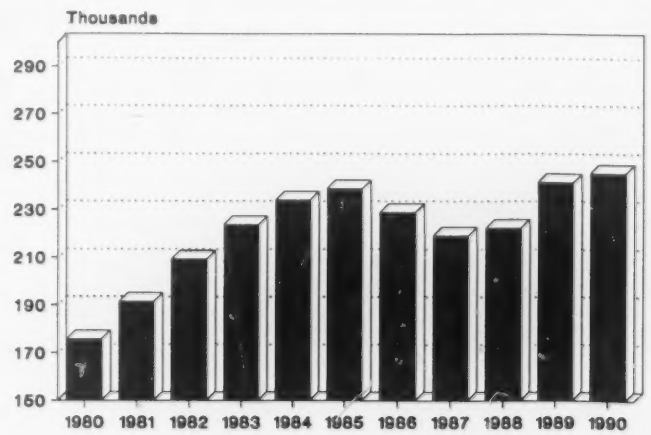
The manufacturing sector added more jobs from May to June than any other industry, almost totally due to seafood processors gearing up for their peak summer season. Last year, the oil spill closed many fishing areas, and the average number of hours worked was down in this industry.

This year employment increased and the number of hours worked per week improved dramatically over last year, averaging 43.1 hours per week in June. (See Table 4.) Processors in Southeast and Southwest Alaska, along with those in the Gulf Coast region, reported more jobs this June than last. The June halibut catch met or exceeded the year's quota in all but one area and kept processors busy.

Most regions had decent salmon returns, although some areas such as Cook Inlet and the Copper River flats got off to a slow start. An exception was Bristol Bay, where the red salmon run sur-

Figure 1

Employment in Month of June 1980-1990



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

prised everyone. It was more than double what was predicted, and will go down as the second best harvest in Bristol Bay's history. The total catch was slightly higher than last year's harvest, and prices are similar to what was paid last season. If post-season price adjustments are the same as last year, the harvest could set an all-time record in dollar value. The salmon harvest statewide was one-third higher than last year through mid-July.

Table 2

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work — Alaska

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	Changes from: 5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	245,500	234,500	241,500	11,000	4,000
Goods-producing	44,200	38,200	41,700	6,000	2,500
Mining	11,400	10,600	10,400	800	1,000
Construction	12,600	10,900	11,600	1,700	1,000
Manufacturing	20,200	16,700	19,700	3,500	500
Durable Goods	4,600	4,200	4,500	400	100
Lumber & Wood Products	3,600	3,200	3,600	400	0
Nondurable Goods	15,600	12,500	15,200	3,100	400
Seafood Processing	11,700	8,700	11,300	3,000	400
Pulp Mills	900	900	1,000	0	-100
Service-producing	201,300	196,300	199,800	5,000	1,500
Transportation	20,900	19,600	24,900	1,300	-4,000
Trucking & Warehousing	2,600	2,400	2,600	200	0
Water Transportation	1,400	1,300	1,700	100	-300
Air Transportation	7,000	6,500	6,500	500	500
Communications	3,300	3,200	3,200	100	100
Trade	48,500	45,900	46,900	2,600	1,600
Wholesale Trade	8,900	8,400	8,400	500	500
Retail Trade	39,600	37,500	38,500	2,100	1,100
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	5,500	5,400	5,400	100	100
Food Stores	7,100	6,900	6,700	200	400
Eating & Drinking Places	14,500	13,300	14,300	1,200	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	10,900	10,600	10,600	300	300
Services & Misc.	51,000	48,400	49,800	2,600	1,200
Hotels & Lodging Places	6,500	5,000	6,200	1,500	300
Government	70,000	71,800	67,600	-1,800	2,400
Federal	19,700	19,300	18,800	400	900
State	20,700	20,700	20,100	0	600
Local	29,600	31,800	28,700	-2,200	900

Notes: Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989

p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section

Construction Continues to Show Strong Growth

Strong growth continued in June in the two other goods-producing industries, mining and construction. On the construction side, some large on-going projects are being joined by several new ones to create 1,000 more jobs than last June. Most of this job growth is being reported in Anchorage, although projects are located around the state.

Construction valuation in Anchorage for the first six months is close to twice what it was last year. A mix of new residential (single family), new commercial and alterations to existing commercial buildings are all contributing to increased construction employment. On the down side, the governor's budget veto reduced the amount of state general funds allocated for capital projects by $85 million. Still, a projected capital budget of $147 million is 10% higher than last year's.

The construction picture in Fairbanks is looking good, being the northern headquarters for pipeline repairs. There are still some ongoing military construction projects; new projects which will begin this summer are the Fred Meyer store and the Princess Tours hotel.

Good News for Gold Mining

More good news in the Fairbanks area came from the mining industry. Developers of the Fort Knox gold mine reported positive results from their $9+ million exploration project. Estimates of the deposit have increased 50%, and new technology will allow for extraction of previously uneconomical gold deposits. The mine could be in the development stage as early as 1992. Eventually, employment could match that of Greens Creek or Red Dog, in the 200-300 job range.

Another gold mine, Valdez Creek in the MatSu Borough, should reopen soon, according to its owners. Shut down last fall, they plan on employing up to 170 people.

Oil and Gas Activity Increases in Cook Inlet, North Slope

There was also good news from the oil and gas portion of the mining industry. Conoco became the third company this year to announce intentions to drill an exploratory well in Cook Inlet. ARCO previously announced plans to start drilling an exploratory well by late summer; their drilling rig is in Seward being modified for winter conditions.

Construction of dikes to protect the Drift River oil terminal from potential flooding was finished in June. This allowed the nine Cook Inlet platforms shut down because of the oil terminal's closure to come back on line by late June. The three month closure had little impact on the platform operators' employment. In fact, it gave them an opportunity to perform maintenance work which could not be done while the platforms were pumping oil. Still unanswered is the question of whether the closures will mean a long-term loss of production from the Cook Inlet oil fields.

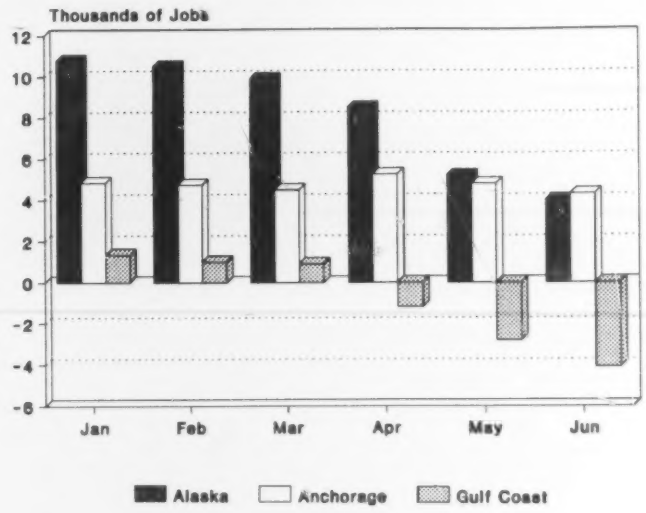
June employment with the North Slope producers and their oil field service companies was well above that of last year. This increase combined with the mines in Southeast and Northwest Alaska and exploration efforts in the Interior has put total mining employment at an all time high for the month of June. Every region except Gulf Coast is sharing in the increase in mining jobs.

Gulf Coast's Job Picture Skewed by Spill Cleanup

There was not much in Gulf Coast in June to offset the disappearance of thousands of oil spill cleanup jobs included in last June's employment. This year, fewer than 200 workers were on the beaches in Gulf Coast. Meanwhile, jobs in the mining and construction industries stayed at 1989 levels and manufacturing employment increased less than 5%. The loss of 4,650 jobs in Gulf Coast's transportation sector from June 1989 to June 1990 is all attributable to the difference in the spill cleanup operations between the two years. (See Table 3.)

Figure 2

Employment Gains & Losses in 1990 Compared to Prior Year



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section

More Cargo Means More Transportation Employment

With the exception of 1989, employment in the transportation, communications, and utilities industry has never been as high in June as in 1990. Both Fairbanks and Anchorage show growth in this sector — an accomplishment considering last year's demand for transportation services associated with the spill cleanup. Materials for construction projects are one reason cargo at Anchorage's port is up 20% for the first six months of 1990 over the same period in 1989. Alyeska Pipeline employment, counted in this industry, has also increased to handle the multi-million dollar repair projects on the pipeline and terminal. Alaska's considerable influx of summer tourists also boosted transportation employment in June.

Table 3

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

Municipality of Anchorage

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	111,450	109,000	107,150	2,450	4,300
Goods-producing	12,750	11,450	11,450	1,300	1,300
Mining	3,800	3,750	3,450	50	350
Construction	6,300	5,450	5,550	850	750
Manufacturing	2,650	2,250	2,450	400	200
Service-producing	98,700	97,550	95,700	1,150	3,000
Transportation	10,800	10,350	10,650	450	150
Trucking & Warehousing	1,450	1,400	1,550	50	-100
Water Transportation	300	350	350	-50	-50
Air Transportation	4,150	3,950	3,950	200	200
Communications	1,900	1,900	1,800	0	100
Trade	26,800	26,200	25,950	600	850
Wholesale Trade	6,500	6,250	6,100	250	400
Retail Trade	20,300	19,950	19,850	350	450
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	2,750	2,700	2,650	50	100
Food Stores	3,250	3,150	3,050	100	200
Eating & Drinking Places	8,000	7,800	7,900	200	100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	6,950	6,850	6,700	100	250
Services & Misc.	28,100	27,400	27,450	700	650
Hotels & Lodging Places	2,550	2,300	2,400	250	150
Government	26,050	26,750	24,950	-700	1,100
Federal	10,550	10,550	10,250	0	300
State	7,350	7,300	6,850	50	500
Local	8,150	8,900	7,850	-750	300

Fairbanks North Star Borough

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	28,600	27,100	28,250	1,500	350
Goods-producing	2,850	2,400	2,750	450	100
Mining	200	200	200	0	0
Construction	2,050	1,650	1,950	400	100
Manufacturing	600	550	600	50	0
Service-producing	25,750	24,700	25,500	1,050	250
Transportation	2,150	2,000	2,050	150	100
Trucking & Warehousing	550	450	450	100	100
Air Transportation	400	400	350	0	50
Communications	250	250	300	0	-50
Trade	6,650	6,100	6,600	550	50
Wholesale Trade	750	750	750	0	0
Retail Trade	5,900	5,350	5,850	550	50
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	600	550	700	50	-100
Food Stores	850	800	800	50	50
Eating & Drinking Places	2,600	2,250	2,500	350	100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	950	900	950	50	0
Services & Misc.	6,300	5,850	6,300	450	0
Government	9,700	9,850	9,600	-150	100
Federal	3,300	3,200	3,250	100	50
State	3,950	3,950	3,900	0	50
Local	2,450	2,700	2,450	-250	0

Anchorage-MatSu Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	118,850	116,200	114,200	2,650	4,650
Goods-producing	13,150	11,800	11,950	1,350	1,200
Mining	3,800	3,750	3,600	50	200
Construction	6,600	5,700	5,800	900	800
Manufacturing	2,750	2,350	2,550	400	200
Service-producing	105,700	104,400	102,250	1,300	3,450
Transportation	11,400	11,050	11,200	350	200
Trade	28,650	28,000	27,600	650	1,050
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	7,400	7,300	7,150	100	250
Services & Misc.	29,500	28,700	28,850	800	650
Government	28,750	29,350	27,450	-600	1,300
Federal	10,850	10,750	10,350	100	500
State	8,100	8,100	7,650	0	450
Local	9,800	10,500	9,450	-700	350

Interior Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	33,150	31,250	32,600	1,900	550
Goods-producing	3,200	2,600	3,050	600	150
Mining	400	350	350	50	50
Construction	2,150	1,700	2,050	450	100
Manufacturing	650	550	650	100	0
Service-producing	29,950	28,650	29,550	1,300	400
Transportation	2,500	2,250	2,400	250	100
Trade	7,200	6,550	7,100	650	100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,050	950	1,000	100	50
Services	7,050	6,450	7,000	600	50
Government	12,150	12,450	12,050	-300	100
Federal	4,050	3,850	4,000	200	50
State	4,300	4,250	4,250	50	50
Local	3,800	4,350	3,800	-550	0

Notes: Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989 p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

(cont. on page 17)

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

Southeast Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	35,500	33,850	34,350	1,650	1,150
Goods-producing	7,850	7,050	7,600	800	250
Mining	400	350	300	50	100
Construction	1,350	1,250	1,200	100	150
Manufacturing	6,100	5,450	6,100	650	0
Durable Goods	3,200	3,000	3,250	200	-50
Lumber & Wood Products	3,050	2,800	3,100	250	-50
Nondurable Goods	2,900	2,450	2,850	450	50
Seafood Processing	1,800	1,350	1,650	450	150
Pulp Mills	950	900	1,000	50	-50
Service-producing	27,650	26,800	26,750	850	900
Transportation	2,750	2,400	2,750	350	0
Trade	5,950	5,450	5,650	500	300
Wholesale Trade	700	700	600	0	100
Retail Trade	5,250	4,750	5,050	500	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,100	1,050	1,050	50	50
Services & Misc.	5,650	5,350	5,450	300	200
Government	12,200	12,550	11,850	-350	350
Federal	2,300	2,250	2,200	50	100
State	5,550	5,550	5,450	0	100
Local	4,350	4,750	4,200	-400	150

Gulf Coast Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	25,600	23,100	29,700	2,500	-4,100
Goods-producing	7,400	5,900	7,200	1,500	200
Mining	850	850	850	0	0
Construction	1,350	1,150	1,350	200	0
Manufacturing	5,200	3,900	5,000	1,300	200
Seafood Processing	4,100	2,950	3,950	1,150	150
Service-producing	18,200	17,200	22,500	1,000	-4,300
Transportation	1,950	1,700	6,600	250	-4,650
Trade	4,350	4,050	4,350	300	0
Wholesale Trade	650	550	650	100	0
Retail Trade	3,700	3,500	3,700	200	0
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	600	550	600	50	0
Services & Misc.	4,850	4,300	4,850	550	0
Government	6,450	6,600	6,100	-150	350
Federal	750	750	600	0	150
State	1,900	1,850	1,900	50	0
Local	3,800	4,000	3,600	-200	200

Northern Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	15,150	14,450	14,350	700	800
Goods-producing	6,650	5,850	6,150	800	500
Mining	5,950	5,250	5,350	700	600
Service-producing	8,500	8,600	8,200	-100	300
Government	4,250	4,500	4,300	-250	-50
Federal	300	300	300	0	0
State	350	350	350	0	0
Local	3,600	3,850	3,650	-250	-50

Southwest Region

	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	Changes from: 6/89	5/90	6/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	16,600	15,700	16,300	900	300
Goods-producing	5,900	4,800	5,800	1,100	100
Seafood Processing	5,350	4,350	5,300	1,000	50
Service-producing	10,700	10,900	10,500	-200	200
Government	6,100	6,450	5,900	-350	200
Federal	1,400	1,350	1,350	50	50
State	550	550	550	0	0
Local	4,150	4,550	4,000	-400	150

Notes: Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989 p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Trade, Services Enjoy Growth as Tourism Increases

Tourism's biggest impact is on private industry's two largest sectors — trade and services. Consequently, most of the seasonal increase in services is in the hotel/motel portion of the industry. However, almost all segments of this industry are showing job gains both seasonally and from year to year. These include business services, health care, legal and social services.

Over the year growth of services jobs slowed in June to 2.4%, but once again consideration of the spill cleanup comes into play. This sector of the economy grew faster than most others during 1989's peak months of oil spill cleanup. Last June, for example, services employment showed greater than 10% growth from the previous year. Some of that growth was undoubtedly a temporary burst of demand generated by the spill cleanup. Additional growth this June is a reassuring sign of a healthy economy.

Helping to take the place of last year's cleanup efforts is this year's tourist trade. Pre-season bookings were well above last year's, and as of mid-July the increase was confirmed by the large tour companies. The 1990 season could be the biggest ever for the state. Extending the season to the shoulder months of May and September is contributing to this growth.

Retail stores and restaurants, helped during the summer months by tourist dollars, had over the year job growth in June. However, other parts of the retail trade industry which are supported by the local population (such as car dealers and grocery stores) also posted growth.

Table 4

Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries [1/2]

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89
Mining	$1,113.12	$1,033.24	$1,031.80	48.0	45.1	46.9	$23.19	$22.91	$22.00
Construction	1,208.34	1,175.51	1,140.68	49.3	49.0	46.2	24.51	23.99	24.69
Manufacturing	550.71	614.10	461.00	43.5	44.5	36.5	12.66	13.80	12.63
Seafood Processing	439.62	444.69	315.02	43.1	45.1	33.8	10.20	9.86	9.32
Trans., Comm. & Utilities	607.17	587.83	619.20	35.8	33.9	37.1	16.96	17.34	16.69
Trade	403.74	395.22	403.47	35.2	34.1	35.8	11.47	11.59	11.27
Wholesale	562.77	548.91	544.31	39.0	37.7	39.3	14.43	14.56	13.85
Retail	347.13	341.78	356.72	33.8	32.8	34.7	10.27	10.42	10.28
Finance-Ins. & R.E	416.36	402.34	419.62	34.9	34.3	37.5	11.93	11.73	11.19

Notes: p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates Benchmark: March 1989

1/ Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

2/ Retail Trade excludes eating and drinking establishments.

Averages are based on data for full- and part-time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section

Finance, Insurance & Real Estate Sector is Expanding

Another sign of confidence in the economy was the June announcement of a new bank starting up. A group of Anchorage financiers plans to open a small state-chartered bank by this fall — a turnaround from the past few years when financial announcements were limited to bank consolidations and failures. Key Bank also announced in June that they would open a branch in Kodiak, using the building of a former savings and loan operation. This is the first June in many years that the finance, insurance and real estate industry showed job growth.

Census, Fires Boost Government Employment

Most of the over the year growth in federal employment can be attributed to the 1990 census, with several hundred staff doing follow-up work in June. Some of the increase in state employment was associated with this summer's wildfires in Interior Alaska. Because the fires were unusually large both in size and number, the state added over 200 fire fighters to the 700-800 normally hired during the fire season. An additional 700 emergency hires were made in July.

Local government jobs typically decline from May to June, as school employment drops for the summer months. Local government's 3.1% over the year increase is mostly in education. The governor's operating budget vetoes have left many local governments scrambling to make ends meet this year, and it will not be surprising to see over the year comparisons start to decline.

Summary: Jobs Increase, But At Slower Rate

A statewide employment increase of 1.7% appears sluggish, but not if last June's extraordinary job growth is taken into account. Not only did Alaska's economy make up for several thousand missing oil spill jobs this June, it managed to add 4,000 more. Employment increases kept the unemployment rate down to the second lowest for June, at 6.5%.

A good seafood harvest through June boosted manufacturing jobs, while ongoing and new construction projects contributed to an amazing job growth rate of almost 9% statewide.

The mining industry showed increased activity this June — in Cook Inlet and the North Slope for oil and gas, and in all regions of the state for hard rock mining. A booming tourist industry is contributing to more jobs in trade and services. A healthy sign is that the local population is also affecting employment in these two industries. The Gulf Coast region, where thousands of jobs were temporarily created last year during the oil spill cleanup, is the only region with less employment this June than last June.

Table 5

Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89	p/ 6/90	r/ 5/90	6/89
Alaska Statewide	262,714	256,389	261,145	17,183	18,631	15,890	6.5	7.3	6.1	245,531	237,758	245,255
Anch.-MatSu Region	132,538	131,550	128,526	7,632	8,327	7,184	5.8	6.3	5.6	124,906	123,223	121,342
Municipality of Anchorage	116,998	116,001	113,634	5,773	6,291	5,565	4.9	5.4	4.9	111,225	109,710	108,069
MatSu Borough	15,540	15,549	14,892	1,859	2,036	1,619	12.0	13.1	10.9	13,681	13,513	13,273
Gulf Coast Region	32,393	30,099	36,145	2,923	3,253	1,894	9.0	10.8	5.2	29,470	26,846	34,251
Kenai Peninsula Borough	20,039	18,580	22,455	1,982	2,131	1,469	9.9	11.5	6.5	18,057	16,449	20,986
Kodiak Island Borough	7,285	6,605	8,218	405	337	221	5.6	5.1	2.7	6,880	6,268	7,997
Valdez-Cordova	5,069	4,914	5,472	536	785	204	10.6	16.0	3.7	4,533	4,129	5,268
Interior Region	37,550	36,322	37,127	3,133	3,561	3,001	8.3	9.8	8.1	34,417	32,761	34,126
Fairbanks North Star Bor	32,444	31,238	31,995	2,602	2,831	2,405	8.0	9.1	7.5	29,842	28,407	29,590
Southeast Fairbanks	2,097	2,094	2,045	190	279	154	9.1	13.3	7.5	1,907	1,815	1,891
Yukon-Koyukuk	3,009	2,990	3,087	341	451	442	11.3	15.1	14.3	2,668	2,539	2,645
Northern Region	8,619	8,521	8,397	838	817	818	9.7	9.6	9.7	7,781	7,704	7,579
Nome	3,153	3,139	3,215	307	321	443	9.7	10.2	13.8	2,846	2,818	2,772
North Slope Borough	3,075	3,036	3,026	132	122	159	4.3	4.0	5.3	2,943	2,914	2,867
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,391	2,346	2,156	399	374	216	16.7	15.9	10.0	1,992	1,972	1,940
Southeast Region	37,625	36,363	36,992	1,980	2,036	2,207	5.3	5.6	6.0	35,645	34,327	34,785
Haines Borough	897	881	892	49	65	65	5.5	7.4	7.3	848	816	827
Juneau Borough	16,829	16,134	16,535	710	611	803	4.2	3.8	4.9	16,119	15,523	15,732
Ketchikan Gateway Bor	7,028	6,840	6,885	422	479	439	6.0	7.0	6.4	6,606	6,361	6,446
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketch	2,864	2,826	2,880	235	294	315	8.2	10.4	10.9	2,629	2,532	2,565
Sitka Borough	4,397	4,193	4,288	198	149	191	4.5	3.6	4.5	4,199	4,044	4,097
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon	1,804	1,783	1,765	163	202	163	9.0	11.3	9.2	1,641	1,581	1,602
Wrangell-Petersburg	3,806	3,706	3,747	203	236	231	5.3	6.4	6.2	3,603	3,470	3,516
Southwest Region	13,989	13,534	13,958	677	637	786	4.8	4.7	5.6	13,312	12,897	13,172
Aleutians East Borough	982	953	975	8	9	11	0.8	0.9	1.1	974	944	964
Aleutians West	2,764	2,681	2,753	34	36	52	1.2	1.3	1.9	2,730	2,645	2,701
Bethel	5,392	5,184	5,415	346	296	422	6.4	5.7	7.8	5,046	4,888	4,993
Bristol Bay Borough	527	513	529	12	14	20	2.3	2.7	3.8	515	499	509
Dillingham	2,508	2,450	2,482	97	115	97	3.9	4.7	3.9	2,411	2,335	2,385
Wade Hampton	1,816	1,753	1,804	180	167	184	9.9	9.5	10.2	1,636	1,586	1,620

Notes: p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates Benchmark: 1989

- Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor force data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey in formulas used to allocate federal funds.
- Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor.
- The official definition of unemployment currently in place excludes anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of each month. Most Alaska economists believe that Alaska's rural localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.
- The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Employment tables.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Alaska Economic Regions